

## COMMUNICATIONS

By

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Elements involved in effective communication are:

- a. Content - Subject Matter - This refers to what you want to say or are saying.
- b. Purpose - This is what you are trying to accomplish. It generally is the end result or goal.
- c. Direction - This factor is concerned with who is communicating with who.
- d. Attitude - This factor is concerned with how your point of view is interpreted by those who are receiving your communication.
- e. Media - This refers to the various channels and devices which are used to get a message across. Examples are booklets, face-to-face communication, and telephone.

All effective communication contains these elements. They can be of value when planning and executing communication.

Some handicaps of communication are:

1. Many words do not have standard meanings: what one word means to one person is not necessarily what it means to another.
2. Interpretation beyond words: examples of factors affecting this are tones, actions, and emotions.
3. Insight into situation: deriving different meanings from a given set of facts.
4. The receiving person has his own translation system: the communication says what he wants to hear.

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5. The inability to "sell" an employee an idea: the employee is very commonly told to do something and does not understand why he is doing it.
6. Failure to listen.
7. Failure of supervisor to listen to ideas of subordinates.
8. No system of screening or auditing communication to determine their effectiveness.

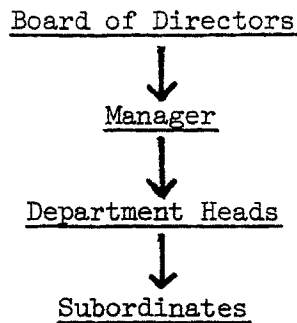
What should be communicated? There are seven classifications of things that should be communicated.

1. General Information about the Business -
  - ideals - what we believe in
  - objectives - where we are headed
  - policies - what guides to follow
  - plans - how to get there
  - achievements - how we are doing
2. Instructions - Each employee, in order to perform effectively, needs to know what is expected of him.
3. Coordination - Coordination means the fitting together and timing of the various factors of a system's operation. In terms of the employee it means "How do I affect others?", and "How can they help me?"
4. Suggestions and Proposals - Management must always be receptive to ideas which flow through the minds of employees.
5. Appraisals of employee performance - It answers two basic questions - "How am I doing?", and "What is my opportunity?"
6. Subordinate problems - This includes employee problems, concerns, interests, handicaps, worries, and complaints.
7. Social interests - Within an enterprise community, employees build a social life which satisfies their human needs. A part of this social life is the exchange of personal information about their friends and associates.

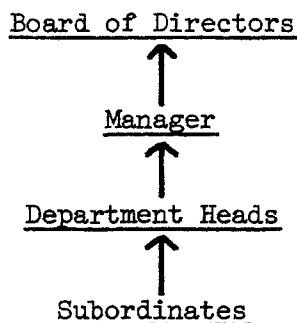
#### The Flow of Communications

There are three major flow structures in administrative communication, downward flow, upward flow, and horizontal flow.

- A. Downward Flow - This is the dissemination of information from the top down through the employee ranks. This information is generally policies, procedures or orders.



- B. Upward Flow - This process is basically opposite the downward flow because information goes up through the ranks. In turn this data is collected into reports and forwarded up to each subsequent level. A board of directors then uses this data to form or correct existing policies in order to complete the cycle.



- C. Horizontal Flow - This is the interchanging of information among positions and units at the same level. The conference process is one of the most productive procedures for achieving unified understanding of necessary parallel actions of separate departments (as well as internal action within a group).

Department Head ⇌ Department Head ⇌ Department Head

In preparing communications, the following checks may be helpful:

1. Is my communication clear?
2. Is my communication consistent with the organization's objectives?
3. Is my communication adequate?
4. Is my communication timely?
5. Is my communication being distributed to all who should have it?
6. Do those receiving my communication understand it and how it affects them?

### Communicating for Positive Results

People need to understand a communication in order to give it their support. They need to accept an idea before they will do more than simply go through the motions of performing the task. Thus, the objective of communication in a manager subordinate relationship is presenting communications in such a way that produces first understanding and then acceptance.

Situations demanding good communications start at the beginning of employment and continue throughout a person's working time. Some of the more important of these situations are:

Starting the new employee: Recognize that each person is unique and different. Communicate everything necessary for him to know how to do his work correctly. Tell him company objectives and facts regarding the coordination of his job with other jobs. Establish a friendly relationship that will encourage the employee to express himself freely.

Instructing and giving orders: There is a daily need for training on the job. Adapt your methods to the individual. Instructions may be ineffective if they are not organized into proper learning order. Working through people emphasizes the essential nature of every supervisor's responsibility for giving orders effectively. Every manager should recognize that not only the words, but the tone of voice and the apparent attitude that accompanys the order affects the way the task is carried out.

Employee mistakes and discipline: Try to see mistakes not simply as wrong performance but in terms of what really causes it. Approach correction with a problem solving attitude rather than, "Do it or else." Be fair but firm. Start your correction by commending his good performance.

The conference: The elements that identify a conference are its purposefulness, the presence of a leader and a small group, member participation, and interchange of ideas. By definition conferences are not the means for executives to transmit orders or give reports. The conference may precede, parallel or follow such transmissions, and is an important means of administration communication.